

Show which will be open to the public between 9 am-4 pm daily from 12-16 July. This interesting family is noted particularly for its volatile oils. Some species such as the Con-fetti Bush (*Coleonema pulchellum*) are favourite garden subjects and the display will feature a number of these horticultural selections. There will also be demonstrations on the distilling and applications of essential oils, medicinal uses of Rutaceae as

well as some of their other traditional uses in various cultures. There will be two more shows this year. Succulents will be the subject from 9-13 August and an *Erica* Show will be mounted from 15-19 November.

TEA HOUSE

Extensions to the Kirstenbosch Tea House are presently underway to increase the indoor seating space and are being completed. 

THE "A" TEAM

An interim report by Prof. W. P. U. Jackson

As the "A" team project is not yet complete, this article (written by request), is an interim report, produced in the hope that it may be of use to other branches.

THREE OF THE FOUR objects of the Botanical Society of South Africa include the following:

- 1) To interest the people . . . in the progress and development of the National Botanic Gardens of South Africa . . .
- 2) To promote the conservation and cultivation of the indigenous flora of South Africa, encourage public interest therein . . .
- 3) To enlighten and instruct on . . . the said indigenous flora.

With the recent increase in human population pressure, need for recreational facilities and reduction in natural vegetation, it became necessary to organise walks, outings and tours for members of the Botanical Society, representing the more enlightened general public, in order to improve their knowledge and appreciation of the veld and the gardens.

The death of Karl Hauser and the retirement of Brian Rycroft left us woefully short of people both able and willing to lead these important pursuits. Professional botanists and horticulturalists are not generally available — after all they want a change when they are off duty. It was Ann Swanepoel — recently appointed secretary to the newly constituted Kirstenbosch branch of the Botanical Society — who suggested to me that I (together with my mountain-colleagues, Drs Jim Macgregor and Ed Coetzee) might perhaps take three or four keen members to train as

future leaders.

And so a notice was included in the April news bulletin requesting volunteers. We received approximately 40 applications. We started with a meeting in July and since then we have met every weekend for outings lasting between three and nine hours (if wet we went indoors for discussions). Those who could, have met also once during the week for three-hour "doggy walks", and we have had lectures and outings with experts (ecologists, taxonomists, plant physiologists etc.).

Membership of the team has changed a little since the initial meeting, but the number has remained about the same. The team includes members of various ages, sexes about equal, several with different biological degrees and vocations, others with degrees in pharmacy, chemistry, law, astronomy, surveying and medicine. One enterprising lady lives in Caledon and comes over most weekends for our meetings.

This year we continued in the same vein, but with more meetings in the country. We had a week-long practical course in the Department of Botany at the University of Cape Town in April. Our first meeting in January was with the Chief Forester in Orange Kloof. We have a 4-5 day excursion to the southern coastal area in the pipe-line for the spring.

Already some of our members have taken the initiative and led outings of their own (e.g. for University wives, for pharmacists and for the Botanical Society members at Caledon), and more will soon follow.

Lest it be thought that the "A" team is attempting to hog all the limelight let me afford due appre-

Comment by Anne Reysenbach — one of the team:

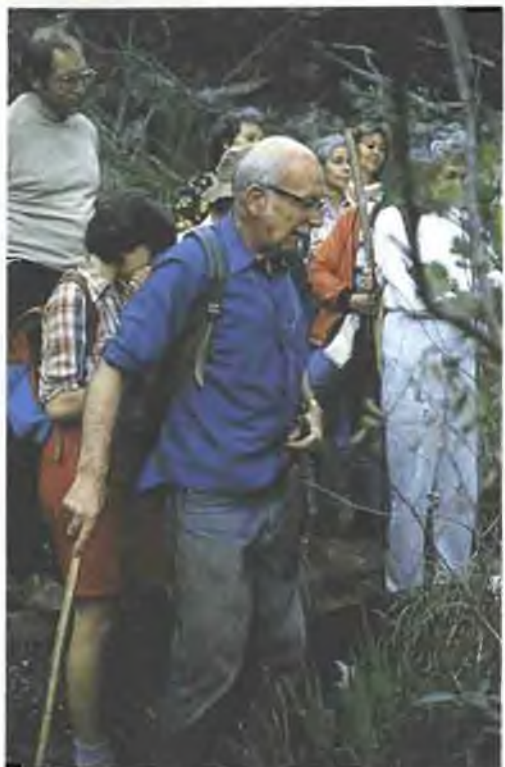
All A-team members have one thing in common: they all wish to share their love for the Cape flora and mountains with others. The unique opportunity of being "trained" by Prof. Jackson is really producing the formidable A-team.

We have thus far covered a wide area of mountain and coastal fynbos, under a variety of weather conditions . . . This has exposed us to a very broad spectrum of the flora, providing a basis for comparing different vegetation types. We are therefore not only learning to identify the plants, but are obtaining a much greater understanding of the ecological and physiological interplays occurring within the fynbos biome.

As a result of human pressures, our natural habitats are continually being threatened. The Cape floral kingdom is renowned for its diversity and beauty. The A-team believes that once we are confidently "equipped" we will be able to further stimulate public interest to appreciate our unique heritage. We are therefore deeply indebted to Prof. Jackson and professional botanists and foresters, whose valuable knowledge is helping us achieve our ultimate aims.

ciation to the tremendous efforts of Peter Paterson and his friends in arranging monthly mid-week walks for Botanical Society members who can get off at that time. These are extremely well attended and I hope that some "A" team members will be able to assist, at least with such botanical input as is appropriate to a Botanical Society. And as regards teaching appreciation of the Gardens, I must mention the excellent work of Christien Malan and the Kirstenbosch guides, some of whom are also "A" team members.

Members of the "A" team have started to work as "voluntary secretaries" to help our hard-pressed staff in the office. We have thus an "Hon. Sec. Programme Committee", "Hon. Sec. 'A' team arrangements" (two members jointly), "Hon. Sec. monthly meetings", "Hon. Sec. Spring tour", "Hon. Sec. Outings for Bot. Soc." and new "Hon. Sec. H. team" (i.e. a horticultural team, in process of being formed). Members have also offered to help remove alien vegetation in the garden, to assist other committees and to be useful at flower shows (they



Prof W P U Jackson with a group of "A" team members.

already have been) and other Botanical Society activities.

A would-be leader requires to know a lot more than the names of plants likely to be encountered. He or she should know something of the origins of their names, common and scientific (etymology), something of plant relationship between themselves (taxonomy) and to their environment (ecology), their inner workings (physiology), how they are made up (morphology), their habitats and soil (geology) and their relations with other kingdoms (animals, fungi and bacteria). In addition, he should know where to go and how to go (access, routes, mountain safety etc.), he must learn to observe (most difficult) and be able to speak up and hold his audience.

The value of trained members will not of course be restricted to the Botanical Society but will, I sincerely hope, be of benefit to colleagues, school teachers and children of all racial groups, and the community at large. And, let us hope, through their influence and that of people like them, this Cape flora that we hold in trust, may be saved for, and appreciated by, future generations.



Spring tour to the flowers 26–30 August 1985

THIS year, the Society's 5-day spring tour will be led by Prof W P U Jackson (our vice-president and author of, among others, "Wild Flowers of Table Mountain"), Mrs M L Thomas (plant propagator at Kirstenbosch) and Mr Ernst van Jaarsveld (also from Kirstenbosch).

The tour will include visits to Knersvlakte, Niewoudtville, the Biedouw Valley, and the rooibos tea plantation. Price: R280,26. **Closing date:** 1 July 1985. For further information **write** to the Secretary, Bot. Soc. of SA, Kirstenbosch, Claremont 7735 (or **phone** (021) 77-1725).

PLANT SALE 1985

THIS YEAR'S was the 10th Plant Sale at Kirstenbosch and yet another unqualified success. Buyers came from near and far pushing wheelbarrows, trolleys and prams. When the gates opened they swarmed in and the sale began. Many for whom the event had become an annual one needed no guidance, while the more hesitant buyers were painstakingly advised by Kirstenbosch horticulturists and more than 100 Botanical Society members acting as salesmen, cashiers or traffic controllers.

Buyers were not only treated to more than 30 000 of the most beautiful trees, shrubs, ferns, proteas and ericas, but for the first time saw the bright yellow tags indicating new horticultural introductions such as *Buxus macowanii*, *Mimetus argenteus*, *Euryops annae* and *Indigofera natalensis*.

The sale has come a long way since its humble beginning 10 years ago when Edna van der Merwe, Bot. Soc. council member, and Kirstenbosch curator John Winter, first thought of the idea. Their aim was to promote indigenous flora and raise funds for the horticultural development of Kirstenbosch. The



Edna and John smiling — rightly so!

first sale raised R2 000. This year's sale brought in R62 000! The interest now is nation-wide, and Edna and John can be justly proud of their achievement.

Thus far, the funds have been used for nursery extensions and improved facilities. The remainder will go towards ambitious plans for the future requiring hundreds of thousands of Rands... But if the teamwork and enthusiasm of the past are anything to go by, Bot. Soc. members and Kirstenbosch will get there.

Ann Swanepoel



Pleased buyer pushing pram, with Edna, just behind her, wondering about baby...